2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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766 [768] two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

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greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and simply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser *molimo*, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER MOLIMO (*molimo mangbo*)

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in providing food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.